TRANSCRIPT—BRUCE AND CLARA WRIGHT

Interviewee: David Bruce Wright and Clara Jean Wright

Interviewer: Tealey Ellis and Judith Robertson

Interview Date: February 28, 2019

Location: 1 Taylor Road, Fairview Public Library

Length: 1 digital recording; 00:52:57

Transcriber: Rev.com

Transcription Date: November 2, 2022

Abstract: Spouses D. Bruce Wright and Clara Jean Wright discuss their early lives in Fairview, including where they were born and their parents' occupations. They also talk about their experiences in school, their involvement in the community, and their own courtship and marriage of 49 years. They reflect on the changes in the community over the years and the sense of community and values they gained from living in Fairview. They also discuss their involvement in singing and volunteering at nursing homes. Overall, they express their love for Fairview and the importance of family and community in their lives.

TE: Okay. My name is Tealey Ellis and I am a volunteer with the Fairview Library Oral History Project. Today, February 28th, 2019, I am interviewing Bruce and Clara Wright at the Fairview Library. Thank you Bruce and Clara for this interview.

JR: This is Judith Robertson recording the oral history of Clara and Bruce Wright at the Fairview Library at 1:45 on February 28th, 2019. The conditions of use form for sound and video recordings has been signed by the interviewees.

TE: Let's start with looking at your interview life history form over here. And we were talking earlier that you all were born in this area. So, if each of you could tell us where specifically you were born, we'll start there.

CJW: Well, I was born at the Norburn Hospital. I think it was in Biltmore.

TE: Okay.

CJW: The 26th of July, 1940. And Bruce was born at home.

TE: And where was that?

DBW: Two miles out on Old Fort Road.

TE: Okay.

DBW: And it was in March 9th of '43.

TE: Okay. Is that home, that building still standing?

DBW: No. We'd done away with it and built a new building.

TE: Okay. Okay.

CJW: But it's still there on the same property.

DBW: It's on the same the property.

CJW: The spot.

TE: Okay. Okay. When you were born at that home, did a doctor attend or midwife or?

DBW: Dr. McCracken.

TE: Dr. McCracken came. And he was from Fairview?

DBW: Yes ma'am.

TE: Okay. Did you know later where his office was-

DBW: Yes. Right past the school house, where the donkeys is, that down there.

TE: Yes.

DBW: That's the old McCracken place.

TE: Oh, okay. So that building itself, that house itself?

DBW: I think so.

TE: Okay.

DBW: I think so.

TE: Okay. Do you have any idea of what his fee might have been?

DBW: No. I don't. (laughter)

TE: Just curious because there was a time in history when... Because I was born at home as well. Doctor came and there was a time when there was bartering going on. So, I'm

just curious if you'd ever heard anything about that. For each of you, what about your parents? Their names and were they born here?

CJW: Mine were. My daddy was born, I guess, about halfway up Old Fort Road, I mean Miller Road, I'm sorry. And my mother, she was born... They lived on Sharon Road. I had never really thought of where they were born.

TE: Okay. Do you know where their parents, were they born here in Fairview area or?

CJW: I'm sure they were, because they've always lived here.

TE: Okay. Okay. Any idea where their home place might have been? Your grandparents?

CJW: No ma'am.

TE: Okay. Just curious. And you sir?

DBW: Well, my mother, she was born just on out Old Fort Road and my daddy was where I was born. That's the old home place.

TE: That was the home place. Okay.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Do you have any pictures of it?

DBW: Let's see. I don't think we do. Do we?

CJW: No. The picture we have at home of, we have so many, so few pictures of his daddy was on the steps. And we don't know if it's at a home place or if it's at a church.

TE: Gotcha. Okay. All right. That makes sense. What type of work did your parents do?

CJW: They both worked at... My mother worked for 46 and a half years at Sayles Biltmore Bleacheries. That was only job she ever had.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And then Daddy worked. He worked partly at the bleachery and then he drove a truck. But whatever kind of work that you would call that. But I mean they both worked.

TE: They both worked and primarily there for their work history?

CJW: They worked in Asheville.

TE: In Asheville, yes. At the bleachery. Give me the name of it again. I'm think I missed-

JR: Sayles. The Sayles Bleachery.

TE: Sayles Bleachery, oh.

CJW: Sayles Biltmore Bleacheries.

TE: Oh, okay.

CJW: That's where the Wal-mart is now.

TE: Okay, okay, okay. Sometimes I'm out of it a little bit because I'm not from here originally, so I'm learning as I go along. So, thank you for your patience with me. And your parents, Bruce?

DBW: My momma she used to be at home-

TE: And worked hard.

DBW: And my daddy, he was mostly farming. But he worked a short time at Beacon Manufacturing, but it was a short time.

TE: Okay. What kind of crops did he have?

DBW: Just corn and hay and--.

CJW: He had a blacksmith shop.

DBW: Yeah, he had a blacksmith shop.

CJW: He was very talented.

DBW: And people, if they needed something done while they're just, he had a shop and the people would come and they'd just throw whatever what it was in the corner over there. And then when it come a rainy day, while everybody gathered in and they'd pick out their stuff and he'd fix it for them, they'd go on their way.

JR: That's a good system.

TE: They knew what to do, didn't they?

DBW: Oh yeah.

TE: Yeah.

DBW: Yeah.

CJW: Tell them about on Thanksgiving Day what you did.

DBW: Oh, killed hogs.

TE: Yes. And that was an all day event?

DBW: Yeah. But it started and he killed for the community sometimes.

TE: Oh.

DBW: Yeah. Up in the 20s.

TE: Oh wow.

DBW: And they'd bring them in and he had a place fixed to process--

TE: To do that.

DBW: --and everything.

JR: So, they did all of that at your house?

DBW: Yeah.

TE: And then those people that he did that for then took their meat and went on home.

DBW: Went on their way. Yeah.

TE: Yeah. On your property there, when that was happening, was there any rendering of the lard and all of the cracklings and things?

DBW: Just our personal. But as far as the people that brought them in, no.

TE: Okay.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: But personally you all did that? Yeah.

DBW: Yeah.

CJW: But they took the... to a neighbor's house to make livermush.

DBW: Yeah.

CJW: Bruce said that was the best livermush.

DBW: Yeah.

CJW: Miss Sayles... What was her name? Granddaddy's...

DBW: Exel.

CJW: Exel Sales made the livermush.

TE: Okay. So, she was well known for that?

DBW: Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

TE: Go ahead. Go ahead.

DBW: Cemetery. But he also dug graves.

TE: Okay.

DBW: Yeah. When some passed, they'd come and--

CJW: Oh, I have a...

DBW: --no matter who--

TE: Oh?

CJW: A picture.

DBW: --no matter what he was doing, farming or whatever, he just laid it down and went--

TE: And then took care of that.

DBW: When I got big enough, I had to go to.

TE: You had to help.

DBW: And sometimes see, it was by hand and sometimes, why, we'd dig in the daytime and then have another funeral set the next day and we'd have to dig at night, you know.

TE: Wow.

DBW: So, it was a long process.

TE: Indeed.

DBW: And it had to be six foot deep. It couldn't be five foot and a half. It had to be six foot for him.

TE: Yeah.

DBW: He wouldn't--.

TE: And any idea how long it took to dig one grave site?

DBW: Well, it depends, for there's a lot of rock. So, it depend. But most of the time it pretty well took little over a day's work to get the grave and then of course you had to be there to cover the grave, finish it up.

TE: Sure.

JR: My goodness. Tree roots and rock.

DBW: Yes.

JR: Oh, my goodness.

TE: That's hard.

DBW: And then he took care of the cemetery.

TE: Okay.

DBW: Mowing.

TE: And which cemetery is this?

DBW: Cane Creek over here.

TE: Okay.

DBW: But he mowed it with a little 18-inch push mower.

TE: Oh, wow.

DBW: That's what he mowed. I forget how many acres it was that he mowed.

TE: And that took a while too?

DBW: Oh, yes.

TE: Is that your--.

DBW: [inaudible 00:09:35]. Right there is my daddy. Right there.

JR: Oh, there he is. Right in the middle of the picture. Yeah. Holding the spade.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Oh, okay.

JR: Oh, my goodness. Oh, my goodness. Are these people also helping to dig?

DBW: Oh no.

JR: No.

DBW: They're cleaning. That was before this grave.

JR: Oh, I see. Oh, okay.

DBW: And they went there in the spring and cleaned all of the weeds and everything off. That's my brother there. But all of these people, they would--

JR: The whole community is there.

DBW: --are working.

JR: Well, can we copy this?

DBW: Oh yes.

TE: Is your mom in the picture?

DBW: Yeah.

JR: June, 1956 it says. My goodness. Well, it's a lot of people out there doing the work. Makes it go faster.

TE: Are you in there, Bruce?

DBW: Oh. Oh yeah. Right there is my momma, right there.

JR: Oh.

DBW: Right there is Dodo.

JR: Is that your brother?

DBW: No, that's me.

TE: Is that your nickname?

DBW: No.

JR: That is so cool. We'll get that photocopied.

TE: Yes. That would be marvelous. Bruce, you mentioned that your dad was a blacksmith also. By any chance, do you still have any pieces left that he made?

DBW: I didn't have room where we at now to put the shop, but I kept his anvil, you know, where you beat the...

TE: Oh. Yes.

DBW: I've got it, but then I've got some of his hand tools.

TE: Okay.

DBW: But most of it, well, I sold it, most of it.

JR: Did people bring horses for shoeing?

DBW: Oh yes, he shod horses.

JR: He did that, too? Oh my.

TE: He was a busy man and many talents.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Indeed. You mentioned earlier about growing some usual crops that most farmers would do. Did your mother do a lot of canning and preserving food?

DBW: We done all of that.

TE: Yeah.

DBW: We didn't buy nothing out of the store. The only thing we bought was flour and coffee. That's about it.

JR: Did you have lots of brothers and sisters?

DBW: Didn't hear?

JR: A lot of brothers and sisters?

DBW: Just that one brother.

JR: Just one brother. Oh gosh. You all really had to work hard then.

TE: You did, didn't you.

JR: How about you, did you have brothers and sisters?

CJW: I had no brothers or sisters, just me.

JR: Oh, my goodness. So, you both grew up working?

CJW: Yeah, I knew what housework was. I wasn't much for outside. Mother took me to the garden one time and I didn't care for that. And she sent me back to the house. But daddy made me plant sweet potatoes one time.

TE: How'd that go?

CJW: I didn't care for that. But no, I always had the housework to do.

TE: About how young do you think you were when your mom started teaching you household chores?

CJW: I can't remember. My mother's sister, she had a crippled sister that lived with us.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And I think she came right after I was born and she did the housework. My mother worked, like I say, on public work. And mother was an outside, she worked in the garden and she didn't care too much for the housework. So as far as my age... My aunt's name was Florence, Aunt Florence. And she was just like another mother to me.

TE: Sure.

CJW: So, it's just, she started young. She'd make me hang up my clothes at night. I don't think daddy, mother would hang theirs up. And she'd say, "Now your momma's coat

dresses got wrinkles in it and if you hang it up, that helps." So, I was just very young when I started.

TE: When did you start cooking? At what age roughly?

CJW: Probably nine, 10 years old. And I think the first thing I ever made was cornbread.

TE: Ooh. I bet you make some good cornbread, too?

CJW: Well then see, there was no self-rising.

TE: That's true.

CJW: And you had to put baking powder and soda in it. And my daddy's daddy lived with us and sometimes I'd get too much soda in it. And he called me Cooter. He'd say, "Cooter, this bread is so good, if only it didn't have so much soda in it." But I had grandparents live with us. When my mother's daddy died in '48, they moved my mother's mother in with us. And she lived... Well, I was about 12 years old, I guess, when she died. And then my granddaddy that called me Cooter, he come in '48. And, of course, Aunt Florence, she lived there till she died in '60. So, we've always had a house full.

TE: Yeah.

CJW: I was probably in my early 20s, probably 21, 22, before it was just daddy and mother and me at Christmas time.

TE: Wow.

CJW: And that was a sad Christmas.

TE: Oh yeah.

CJW: Because everybody was gone.

TE: Yeah.

CJW: And it was just us.

TE: But you all had a strong sense of family, that's for sure.

CJW: Well, yes we did.

TE: And how you take care of each other.

CJW: Well, yes. Thank you. We didn't have too many problems. We were just a normal family, but we were happy.

TE: Tell me, each of you about your early memories of school in Fairview. What do you think your earliest memories are of going to school in Fairview?

CJW: My first was first grade. Ms. Lauren Jackson.

TE: I think I've heard that name?

JR: That's the name of the road out here.

TE: That's true. Okay. That's-

DBW: That's it.

JR: And was that at the Fairview Elementary?

CJW: Yeah, that was in the old school.

JR: Oh, all one school.

CJW: Yeah. Before it was built, it was our room and probably Bruce's was too, was right out from the auditorium, the stage. Because I remember there was a step down. But that's the first I remember of school was in Miss Jackson's class.

TE: Do you remember anything specifically about her that stands out?

CJW: She told me I talked too much.

TE: Okay. Surely, she was wrong.

CJW: She wrote it on my report card.

TE: What other memories, after first grade?

CJW: Well, nothing that really stands out. I mean, I know I talk. I always have, but I wasn't a busybody. I wasn't even--.

TE: You didn't gossip?

CJW: No, I tried not to gossip. I'd've got whooped when I got home.

JR: Did you ride the bus to school?

CJW: Yes. Now we lived across from Angelo's restaurant.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And it was too close for the bus to pick me up. But Daddy talked to somebody and bus number 39, Mr. Briggs drove the bus. He would stop and pick me up.

TE: All right.

CJW: But no, I always got to ride the bus. Because they was just afraid or didn't want me to.

JR: You couldn't walk because there was no sidewalk. I mean it was--.

CJW: No, you would've had to walk the old road.

JR: Yeah.

CJW: That come--

DBW: This one here.

CJW: Yeah, this one here. This is the old road, you would've had to walked it.

TE: Okay. Well that--

CJW: And see, I would've had to cross the highway.

TE: Yeah. And that's not good.

CJW: At the store.

TE: Not good.

CJW: And Daddy didn't want that.

TE: Yeah. What about you, Bruce? Your earliest memories of elementary.

DBW: Really, thing it stands out is he was in the eighth grade, Martin. Martin Monument. You might--

TE: I've seen that.

DBW: He was her teacher. And, of course, the ball field was just red clay. And if it rained for a week, it just sloppy muds. And he'd roll his britches legs up and he was right out there with us.

TE: Really?

DBW: Slopping in that mud.

JR: You played football?

DBW: No, it's softball.

JR: Softball.

DBW: Yeah. And he was right out there with us. Yeah.

TE: So, you moved from elementary school, then you went to high school and that would've been--

DBW: Reynolds.

TE: In Reynolds. Okay. What year did you graduate?

CJW: I graduated in '58 and I just went three years to Reynolds. But Bruce went all four years.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: What were your experiences there? What was Reynolds High School like then?

CJW: It was okay. It was--

DBW: Nothing compared to what it is now.

CJW: No. 'Cause we had Oakley and Haw Creek combined.

TE: Okay.

JR: Did you play on any teams or participate in any after school? Had to go home and help with the house, didn't you?

CJW: I had to wash dishes.

DBW: Work time. She had work time.

TE: Go to school and then go home and work.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Any favorite teachers either of you had? I know you mentioned your first grade teacher, Jackson. But somebody that's--

CJW: No one in particular. But I didn't... No problem with any. Even in high school I didn't, no. I didn't have any problem.

TE: Did you have a favorite teacher?

DBW: No.

JR: You were glad when the school was out so you could go home?

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Oh. Looking back at the age you are now and looking back at earlier years, not necessarily childhood years, but young adult years, maybe. What was it like? Was there anything special about it? Was there a sense of community? And what did you do as young teens? What did you do for entertainment and fun?

CJW: We went to church. My daddy was a church man. And he taught shape note singing schools.

TE: And what's that?

CJW: It's shapes of notes. Some diamonds, some circles, some he called a soup bowl. There were seven notes, see seven notes in the scale. And each had a name. And he taught those like Do, Re, Me, Fa, So, La, Ti, Do, were their names. And then he taught singing school. I mean, of course that was in the singing schools. And then he sang for revivals.

TE: Okay.

CJW: So, my time was mostly in church.

TE: Okay. Which church was that?

CJW: We went to Laurel Pines Baptist Church, up on the Old Fort Road.

TE: Okay. Is that still around today?

CJW: Yes.

TE: Okay.

CJW: In fact, the property, Bruce's daddy and Bruce's grandmother gave the property for the church.

TE: Okay. Very nice. Very nice. What about you Bruce? What did the young gentlemen of Fairview do?

DBW: Just work ma'am, that's about it.

JR: Well, you didn't get into any mischief?

DBW: Oh, you ain't going to know.

JR: Come on Bruce.

TE: Come on, give it. Now your wife talked about that she, in elementary school, that she talked a lot and teachers said she needed to stop. So now you need to confess now.

CJW: Well, he didn't talk too much because he's not much a talker. Not too much for that. But--

TE: Just teasing. But we're just curious about--

CJW: They went to church too. In fact, his daddy was one of the first deacons in the church.

TE: Okay.

CJW: Master Wright. I think that's quite an honor.

TE: Yeah.

CJW: And two years ago they ordained him as a deacon in our church.

TE: Oh, wow. Congratulations.

CJW: I told him his daddy would really be proud of him.

TE: Oh yes. Your daddy sound like quite the man.

DBW: Yeah.

JR: Well, I think you both had very talented parents and very productive families.

TE: And had strong values.

JR: Sounds like it. Yeah.

TE: Yeah.

CJW: They did a lot of camping later in the years. Now we never did camp. But--

JR: Did you go hunting?

DBW: No, I didn't do much hunting. But--

TE: Where did you camp?

DBW: North Georgia. See, we had mama's people lived in Atlanta. And see, they would come up and we'd go down and meet. And we'd stay there in between two big creeks and at night animals would come through there. Cats, coons, everything. Yeah. And it's one Labor Day, we'd took two bushel of potatoes, we had to go down to the store and buy more. [Laughter.]

TE: Oh my gosh.

JR: The animals ate them all?

DBW: Yeah, well we ate them all.

JR: They ate them all.

TE: You ate them all.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: And how did you cook those? Did you by any chance cook them in--

DBW: We just had a bonfire. And, of course, the hot coals like the old timey people then.

TE: Right.

DBW: That's how we cooked our stuff. And we had pans, skillets and everything. Everything was old timey cooking.

TE: Yeah. My grandfather called that the potatoes, potatoes in the jacket.

DBW: That's it.

TE: It's what he called them. Yeah. And he would do that inside in the fireplace sometime as well. Did you all do that?

DBW: Well, yeah. It was the same thing. We just on the outside.

TE: On the outside. Wow. Memories.

DBW: Let's see, it's been several years ago, we was going down through there. So, we stopped by and there's a tree that big, growing right up in the center of the fire place.

TE: Oh, my goodness.

JR: Did you carve your initials in it?

TE: As a young man, when did you get your first car?

DBW: Let's see, it was...19. It's either 19 or 20. Yeah.

TE: What kind was it?

DBW: '51 Ford.

CJW: It has to be a Ford.

TE: Of course. And color?

DBW: Blue.

TE: Blue. Two-door?

DBW: I see, yeah. Yeah, it's two doors. Yeah.

JR: Is that what y'all went courting in?

DBW: No. No, we courted in a pickup truck.

TE: Oh, my goodness. How do each of you... First of all, let me back up. Do each of you think that Fairview has changed much over years? And if so, how do you think it's changed?

DBW: Just about in every way. We're used to anybody that come down the highway, you knowed them. Now you don't know nobody.

CJW: Yeah. You could sit on our front porch, we lived on the highway after we were married and they would come out the old road, which is this road here. You was always waving. Yeah. And like you said, you don't know anyone now.

JR: And were you related to a lot of people here? Do you have lots of aunts and uncles in the community?

CJW: Not in the community. My mother's sister lived with us, Aunt Florence. And she had one sister in Swannanoa, and a sister and a brother in Virginia. Now he, Bruce had relatives in Canton in North Georgia, but weren't, not really that close. I don't mean close in fellowship, I mean close--

TE: Right, right. In proximity to each other. Yeah. Well, and back during those earlier days, people didn't travel and visit. If you had relatives move away, you didn't see them very much. But what other ways, I mean besides not knowing everybody now? Other ways that...

DBW: Let me see. There's just, let's see, three stores is all that was in Fairview.

JR: And what were those?

DBW: Guy Merrell’s and then Sheet's Grocery was out Old Fort Road. And then-

CJW: Fairview Supply.

DBW: Well that was in later. Cliff Wilson's up at Old Fort Road up here, where the rock yard's at now.

TE: Okay.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: And there was a store there?

DBW: Yeah.

JR: Did you go to Asheville to shop?

DBW: What, once, twice?

CJW: About once a month. Because daddy and mother grew our stuff, our food. Daddy worked there in Oakley. He worked for the Farmer's Federation.

JR: Oh.

CJW: And there was a little building there that ground corn.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And he would take our corn and have ground into meal. And so about all that mother had to buy was flour and coffee.

JR: What about clothing? Did you buy clothing and tools and things like that?

CJW: Clothing. Aunt Florence sewed lot.

JR: And you could buy fabric in the local store?

CJW: Yeah.

JR: Wow. You really did have everything you needed, right here.

DBW: Let's see the rock yard, the store out here at the school house, the rock place, that used to be a store.

TE: Okay.

DBW: You could buy shoes. Just anything.

TE: You talking about that stone building? Okay.

DBW: That used to be a store.

TE: Okay. Okay. And its name again?

DBW: Paul Nesbitt's.

TE: Paul Nesbitt's.

JR: Did you all carry on this way of life with your children after you married?

CJW: We don't have any children.

JR: Oh, you don't have any children?

DBW: No.

JR: But after you married and became self-sufficient adults, did you carry on any of that way of life?

CJW: Yeah, our life hasn't changed much.

JR: Still raise your food? You still got a garden?

CJW: Yes. We did until he got hurt. We had to move due to the highway.

JR: Oh, the long highway.

CJW: The five lanes that took our place.

JR: I see.

CJW: But fortunately, daddy and mother had property behind. So, we actually moved in behind on Sharon Road. And he grew a garden up until, like I said. Well, we moved in '97 to where we are now. And seemed like the ground didn't produce as much as it did. He had a bigger garden when we lived on the highway. And then of course he got hurt. But up until then. And I canned, I still like to can, but just the two of us. There's not too much use in that. But, we just sort of followed suit from our childhood, I guess.

TE: It's comfortable.

CJW: I loved it.

TE: It's a loss that we have in this country because some of those ways are not--

CJW: It’s secure, for both of us..

TE: --around anymore. What was the, you mentioned losing a home because of the expansion of Highway 74. What did the community think about that? Overall?

DBW: I think more or less went with it, didn't it?

CJW: Yeah.

DBW: You can imagine what it'd be now if it's just too lane.

TE: Oh yeah.

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Traffic is heavy even now at certain times of the day. But generally, it was an accepted thing? Yeah. Interesting. Growing up in Fairview, were there individuals of different races when you were younger? Or when did that start to change?

CJW: I graduated in '58 and Bruce graduated a couple years later. There was no Blacks in my class. There was a couple Black families, or a Black family that lived down on...

DBW: Concord.

CJW: Concord Road. But they went to the Black school in Asheville.

TE: Okay.

CJW: So, we have never had no problems or no dealing with the Blacks.

TE: Were there at the high school level? Were there any students of different races?

DBW: Really not.

CJW: Not when I was there. Bruce graduated in--

TE: Okay.

DBW: '63.

CJW: '63. So, see, it would've been after '63.

TE: And so there really was not people of different color living in Fairview itself?

DBW: No.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And no problem, I mean.

TE: What about back in the day? Did y'all lock your doors?

CJW: We did. But that's ‘cause we lived on the main highway.

TE: Yeah.

CJW: Mother was sort of security captain.

TE: Well, she was probably smart to do that. But your family didn't, Bruce?

DBW: No. Didn't even have a lock on the door.

TE: What about today?

DBW: Oh yes. Yes, we do today.

TE: Do you think, I'm assuming, I'm making a big assumption here, but we are talking about the days when you all locked your door because of living on the highway. You all didn't. But generally, it's a sense of close community and safety, I'm assuming. What about today? Do you think Fairview is a safe place today?

CJW: I guess about as safe as any--

DBW: I'd say--

CJW: --community.

DBW: --compared to any other place that’s the way it is.

TE: Okay. We talked about your church earlier, and you said that church still stands today? Is that the church you attend?

CJW: They still have... Pardon?

TE: Is that the church you attend now?

CJW: No, we left about 10 years ago.

TE: Okay.

CJW: We go to South Asheville Baptist Church.

TE: Okay.

CJW: In Asheville.

TE: Okay. Each of you were involved very much as young people still living at home and helping the home to thrive by work that you did inside or outside. As older individuals, do you still have that sense of community and that people help each other and volunteer to go with someone's house as you know, they have problems and need help?

DBW: Yeah.

TE: Do you think that's still around today?

DBW: It just not--

CJW: Not as much.

DBW: --not as much as it was back in the older days. But-

CJW: I think if you're more church-orientated, your church friends help out more so in that aspect, I think.

TE: So that's where it stems from then and you still think that's today as well? That it stems from your church activity?

DBW: But see, it's the older people that are doing that. The younger people is drifting away.

TE: Interesting. Were there any social events in Fairview when y'all were teenagers?

CJW: No.

TE: Did y'all ever just go out, walking around, holding hands, or...?

CJW: No. I could say my time was with my daddy, going to the singing schools and I played the piano for him when he would sing for a revival. And he stayed, not busy-busy but--

TE: Did you ever have girlfriends to come over and spend the night or did you spend the night with a girlfriend every now and then?

CJW: Not too much. I had a cousin that live below us until they went to Virginia. But I was sort of a homebody.

JR: Now you mentioned that your father worked for the Farmer's Federation. Didn't they have a big picnic every year?

CJW: Oh, that was the highlight. Yes.

JR: Yeah. You went to the picnic, didn't you?

CJW: No, I was too young.

JR: Oh really?

CJW: Yeah.

JR: You never got to go to a single one?

CJW: No, I didn't get to go to a single one.

JR: Oh, it was such a huge event.

TE: Where were they held?

CJW: They'd have one at the Recreation Park and then--

DBW: At Nature Center now.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And they would have one at Andrews, in Murphy. And it was a two-day thing. And mother, I think would get to go and spend the night because, well, they'd spend the night. And Daddy's brother, and I should have brought the picture, but they dressed up as a hen and a chicken.

TE: I like it.

CJW: My daddy was sort of a clown. And I think he fit that type of work just fine. But, oh yeah, that was a highlight. And then he left working for the federation and went somewhere else. And then they reorganized, I guess. And he went back to the federation.

That was after that I was grown and working. Because I know I would stop by on Saturday, he worked on Saturday. And I thought that that was just really something that my daddy worked at a place like that, that I could go in and they didn't want to know who I was and what I was doing.

TE: That was a good feeling, I'm sure.

CJW: Yeah.

JR: So, Bruce, you didn't get to go to any of those either?

DBW: No.

TE: I bet there was some good food at those picnics.

JR: Aw. It was brilliant.

CJW: It was long before our time. Even my time.

TE: Yeah. Do either of you remember, from at least say teenage years and young adulthood, any... Excuse me. Any major events like fires or floods or bad storms that were really kind of record-breaking events?

JR: Actually, any time in their life in Fairview?

TE: Well, yeah anytime. Yeah.

DBW: [inaudible 00:38:08] should be the only thing with it.

CJW: Yeah. We had a fire, it was a family out our church in 1980. And the husband and the wife and the three-year-old got burned.

JR: Oh.

CJW: And they got the little six-year-old boy out and I guess that rocked the Fairview community about as much as anything. And they never did really know what happened. The two cars was in the carport and the way the house burned, the picture of it went up and down. And the couch, they said in the living room where Doris, that was the mother, course she probably was laying because when they found her, she had come from the couch trying to get out, and that was at the carport.

TE: Wow.

CJW: So, they seemed to think that the fire started at the carport, but they never did find out.

TE: Yeah.

JR: That's tragic.

TE: That is tragic. Any major floods in the area that you remember in Fairview at all? Any time?

CJW: Not really major. I don't...

TE: Okay. What about every community that, and kind of in a rural setting in particular, I think always had one or two individuals that are kind of considered the characters of the community. They might be storytellers or jokesters, liking to tell stories. Do either of you recall anyone like that, any of your time here in Fairview?

JR: Or any of those really good people who are always there?

CJW: No, not really. I don't--

JR: You don't remember those?

CJW: I don't know, I don't recall.

TE: Okay. Do either of you recall during all your time in Fairview, any individuals who might have stood out as, and being considered leaders, in the community?

CJW: Oh, not right off. I remember when the fire department was organized, that was a major thing.

TE: Do you know how that got started or who got it started?

CJW: I think the first was under the rock building out here.

TE: Okay.

CJW: Paul Nesbitt's Store.

TE: Okay.

CJW: And it went from there on. But that was a major thing in Fairview.

TE: Yeah. But as far as who started it, you're not really sure, or?

CJW: Guy Merrell had a lot to do with it.

TE: Okay.

CJW: But other than that, right off, I don't remember.

TE: Do you know how long the fire department stayed in that original location?

DBW: No, I don't. Yeah. I don't.

JR: Fortunately, you didn't have to call them.

TE: Yes, that's for sure.

CJW: Daddy didn't belong. And of course, I guess it was his daddy maybe had passed away.

DBW: No, he had passed away when the fire department started.

CJW: Okay. And Bruce never did belong. So, we've never had any dealings with it, I mean.

TE: Okay. If each of you had to sum up what living in Fairview has meant to you. And I know that we've touched on some of those topics throughout the interview, but if you had to try to sum it up in a very short sentence, maybe a couple sentences of what living in Fairview has meant to you.

CJW: It gave me values of life, back like you know how we come up. I know my parents worked on the public works, but still, we had our work to do at home. They give me stability and I wouldn't trade it.

TE: What about you Bruce?

DBW: Well really, it was like when we was coming up, we was in a slow track. In other words, it wasn't a fast track. It's a going today and it is more of a family oriented.

CJW: You knew your neighbors.

DBW: Yeah.

CJW: We mentioned that. I mean you knew your neighbors.

DBW: Really not long after we was married, well, we'd go to church and this other couple went to another church. But we'd come in Sunday night and our whole house would be lit up. Well, they would be in the house cooking and everything just like it was their house. And when we got there, well they'd have the meal ready, about to eat.

TE: I like that.

DBW: But stuff like that, it really--

CJW: Sort of more, I guess family-orientated.

JR: Yeah. I'm curious, as a couple, did you all ever, throughout your whole time here at living in Fairview, think maybe we should move or we should go somewhere?

DBW: No.

CJW: No. Daddy and mother had property. Like I say, we lived on the highway and they had a spot of property, it was right in front of Cane Creek Baptist Church, the church that's up on the hill. And I always said that that was my piece of property. So, when we dated and got engaged and decided to marry, I asked for the property and they gave us the property and we moved a mobile home on it. And then of course the highway took it and we moved where we are now. But we still own the property. But no, we just settled in Fairview.

TE: It's kind of emotional listening to--

JR: It's a good story.

TE: It's a good story. And-

JR: It's like a romance novel.

TE: Well, it is. And I just sense and feel that as much as another individual can know what Fairview has meant to the two of you and the pleasure that you've had in living here.

CJW: We just went together seven months and we didn't really, really know one another. We knew of, like I say, we went to church. Bruce, he did rock work and he come, I guess one Saturday to talk to daddy. Daddy had apparently talked to him about blocking in under the house to store potatoes and apples and whatever. And he tells me now that I didn't... I can still see him at the front door when he knocked at the door. And he still tells me that I didn't ask him to come in. Well, he didn't come to see me. He come to see my daddy.

TE: She was playing hard to get.

DBW: Yeah.

JR: And you didn't have a clue what was up?

CJW: Oh, that was the... I don't even know when? We married in 1969. He started coming to church in 1967, the Lord saved him. And--

TE: That's okay. It's okay.

CJW: I had asked him, would've been in 1969, because we were married in December, my granddaddy was in the nursing home. And we would go occasionally, or of course we usually had singing conventions on that Sunday. But we would go see Pappy. And I had asked him a time or two to go with me and for whatever reason he didn't. And he was in charge, like I say, at the cemetery. Our church would take up money once a year for upkeep of the cemetery. And my daddy was the treasurer of the church and we was getting ready to go to the nursing home and Bruce had a green truck. He drove in. Daddy jumped up and he said, "There's Bruce." He said, "I'll write that check for the cemetery." Bruce come in and sat down there at the end of the piano and daddy handed him the check and Bruce said, I guess he said, "What's that?" And daddy said, "That's the check for the cemetery." Bruce said, "I didn't come for the check." So, I guess that started my--

TE: I came for your daughter. (Laughter.)

CJW: --my feelings. And we started dating and he gave me, I think in September or October, I don't know, I can't remember that. I was thinking about that the other day, he gave me my ring. Our shower was the first Saturday in November. And we was married the first Saturday in December. And we just went together seven months. And we've just celebrated 49 years. Wow.

JR: Bruce, sounds like you handled that really well. You made a good choice and you handled it well.

CJW: And we've been very happy.

JR: Yeah, we can tell.

CJW: Yeah. I got emotional. But--

TE: No, no, no. Don't apologize for feelings of that nature. Wow. And I know, and Judith, I'm sure you do too. I appreciate so much your willingness to share that with us because that is such a special moment that you shared with us and it's greatly appreciated. Before we end, is there any topic, any question that we have not asked you that maybe you had in mind to share when you came today and I just didn't tap into it? Anything at all you'd like to share?

DBW: I don't know? Singing at the nursing home?

CJW: Yeah. We sing now at nursing homes, he and I do.

TE: Oh.

JR: Oh, how wonderful.

TE: How nice.

CJW: We did sing. Singing has been my life and singing has been our life since we've been together.

JR: It's wonderful that you can do it together.

CJW: We did have about, what? Four that we went to. And over the period of time we had two, for whatever reason, they didn't call us back, but we'd sing down at Flesher's once a month. And then his mother is in the Laurels of GreenTree. And we sing there once a month. But we had, for about eight years, we had us singing out in the Fletcher area, on the Fanning Bridge Road called the Back Porch Singers. And we went month to

month. And that was the highlight of our life. But we had people that come from of course surrounding areas of Asheville, Candler, Kingsport, Tennessee, Charlotte, Greenville, Statesville. We went to Paul and Mary McKinney's, they lived in a mobile home and they had a back porch. And so soon, I'd say within just a short time, a few months outgrew that, that he had to continue the length of his porch. But we had about eight years of singing. And like I say, singing has been Bruce and my life.

TE: What a wonderful thing to share.

JR: Absolutely.

DBW: Singing at the nursing homes for 35 years, wasn't it?

CJW: Yeah, we started. We've been [singing] in nursing home for about 35 years.

TE: Wow.

JR: That's amazing. That's about as long as they've had nursing homes.

CJW: We started, the first one we ever sing was down at Becky's Rest Home.

JR: Oh yeah.

TE: Where is that?

CJW: Pardon?

TE: Where's that?

CJW: Down on Brush Creek. Lower Brush Creek.

TE: Oh, okay.

CJW: Becky's Rest Home.

TE: Okay. Wow.

JR: That's a nice place.

TE: Yeah. Judith, is there any questions that you wanted to ask that you didn't?

JR: I can't think of any other questions. I just think this is why we love Fairview. It's because of people like you.

TE: Yes.

JR: You've made this community what it is and that's why we love it. I've been here getting close to 20 years now.

TE: Well--

JR: It's a fabulous place.

TE: --it'll be five years this summer for me. So, I'm still learning. And it is indeed a pleasure to talk with couples like you. We've talked with other individuals, singles and couples that have just shared so much wonderful information and I feel invited. So, thank you for that. And thank you again for sharing your information with us today. We really appreciate it.

DBW: All right, well.

CJW: Thanks for asking.

END OF INTERVIEW.